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Next 1 Page(s) In Document Denied

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THE DIRECTOR OF CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE

WASHINGTON, D. C. 20505

National Intelligence Officers

26 December 1979

MEMORANDUM FOR: Director of Central Intelligence
Deputy Director of Central Intelligence

VIA: Acting Deputy Director for National Foreign Assessment *Reu*
National Intelligence Officer for Warning

FROM: Arnold L. Horelick
National Intelligence Officer for USSR-EE

SUBJECT: Monthly Warning Assessment: USSR-EE

1. Afghanistan. On 18 December 1979, Community analysts reviewed the discussion of the meeting called by NIO/USSR-EE on 17 December which resulted in the issuance of an Alert Memorandum on the Soviet military buildup in and opposite Afghanistan. The Community consensus reflected in the Alert Memorandum was confirmed with one exception. [REDACTED]

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[REDACTED] interpreted Soviet military moves made in this recent period as reflecting considerable "disorganization." One analyst suggested that any disorganization could reflect the response to a real alert as distinct from exercise activity. [REDACTED]

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2. With respect to the political situation, analysts noted that the Soviets have avoided any conspicuous support for Amin personally since his successful September coup against Taraki. This apparent absence of Soviet support suggests (a) that a coup, perhaps Soviet inspired, against Amin remains a possibility, or (b) that the Soviets have decided not to become too closely identified with Amin in the event that circumstances force Moscow to back a successor. The Soviet military buildup, however, is regarded by analysts as evidence of Moscow's determination to maintain a pro-Soviet government of some kind in Kabul. Analysts also agreed that the crucial condition for a viable Afghan regime was the continued support of the Afghan military. [REDACTED]

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SUBJECT: Monthly Warning Assessment: USSR-EE

3. Iran. There was little change in the range of analytical judgements with respect to Soviet objectives in the Iranian crisis, beyond the general observation that the Soviets would seek to exploit the US predicament in Iran and US responses to it, whatever form those might take. No consensus emerged on probable Soviet responses to US military action. [REDACTED]

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4. Poland. The situation in Poland was discussed briefly in light of demonstrations during mid-December in support and remembrance of the disturbances nine years earlier which brought down the regime of party leader Gomulka. The Polish domestic situation was characterized as slightly more fragile than it has been recently, with tensions between dissidents and the government running somewhat higher. Generally, however, the regime has sought to avoid a confrontation with any of the dissident movements or with participants in periodic demonstrations. The powerful Catholic Church has also played a role in containing political tensions. Adequate supplies of provisions for the holiday season should contribute to the maintenance of political order. Some evidence has been noted of Soviet pressure on Gierek, and possibly some from within the regime itself, to take a tougher stance toward dissidents. [REDACTED]

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Arnold L. Horelick

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26 December 1979

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